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ELIZABETH D. BALLANTINE.

A Memorial Sermon

PREACHED IN

AHMEDNUGGUR, INDIA.

MRS. ELIZABETH D. BALLANTINE.

A Memorial Sermon.

BY

RAMKRISHNAPUNT V. MODAK.

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CAMBRIDGE:
Printed at the Riverside Press.
1875.

THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY THE DEATH OF MRS. E. D. BALLANTINE.

BY REV. R. V. MODAK.

"Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas; this woman was full of good works and alms-deeds which she did. And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid *her* in an upper chamber. And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring *him* that he would not delay to come to them. Then Peter arose, and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them. But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning *him* to the body, said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up. And he gave her *his* hand, and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive. And it was known throughout all Joppa: and many believed in the Lord." Acts ix. 36–42.

AFTER a man is dead, *i. e.* after the soul has left the body, for him to become alive again is a thing of very rare occurrence. And when such a thing has occurred, it did not come about by the power of man, or by any means he had used, but only by a miracle, or an unusual providence. Since the creation of the world up to the present day, millions of people have died, but out of them

all, we have accounts in the Bible of only eight who were raised to life again. Therefore it is plain that this thing is very uncommon and rare, and that which is so very uncommon is a thing especially worthy of our consideration. The thoughts therefore that are presented in our text are of very great importance.

A woman named Tabitha who lived in Joppa died, but having been dead some time, God raised her to life again, and allowed her to live a while longer upon this earth. The account of this is briefly related in the seven verses of our text.

This woman's name is given with its meaning. Tabitha is a Hebrew name, and Dorcas a Greek name. Both mean the same thing, that is, a gazelle. Women of a very beautiful countenance used to receive this name. This shows that Tabitha's relations thought her beautiful, and when persons are beautiful in their spirits, as well as in their bodies, their loveliness is very remarkable. It will appear plainly from the following narrative, that this Tabitha was not only beautiful, but also very attractive and lovely in her internal nature.

She was by birth a Jewess, which is indicated by her name. She was one of those few chosen Jews who had been waiting for the Messiah, for she had joined the Christian Church very soon

after it was established. Indeed she may have been one of the " many women " who followed the Saviour from the first.

She lived in Joppa, a port of the Mediterranean Sea. At that time it was the most important port of Palestine. Most of its trade with other countries was carried on at this port. Rich and prosperous merchants lived in this city. Most likely Tabitha's husband had been a great merchant, and had built a house and lived there. The style of his house shows that he must have been rich. For there was an upper chamber to the house, and it could easily hold a large concourse of people. This woman had the means of giving freely in charity. So her husband doubtless left her a good property. We are not informed whether her husband became a Christian or not. May be that after Tabitha became a widow, she was converted, and therefore nothing is said of him. Doubtless at this time she had no children, else some mention would have been made of them. But although she was a childless widow, she was not without friends. She had followed closely the instruction of our Lord in Luke xvi. 9 : " Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness." She did not use her wealth in merely securing pleasure and ease for herself, but she used a proper proportion in help-

ing the poor and needy around her. She did not need to work for her support, yet she did not waste her time in idleness and amusement. With her own hands she made garments, and thus helped the friendless widows around her. This is evident from the fact that these widows were standing by the corpse weeping, and showing Peter the coats and garments she had made for them.

Although she was such an excellent woman, and "full of alms-deeds," yet she fell sick. But she had no lack of friends to visit her, and to watch beside her in her sickness, neither was there any want of means to provide herself with suitable medicines. Still she died. At that time many may have said, "O Lord, instead of taking her so soon, why didst not thou take us who are so weak and disabled by overwork and by age, and are thus become a burden to others?" But Peter must have rebuked them, and told them to be still, for the Lord never makes mistakes. We do not always understand his arrangements and reasons, therefore we should wait patiently until He reveals them to us. In Isa. lvii. 1–2, he says: "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter into peace:

they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness." So the Lord sometimes takes his dear servants away quickly from their labors and toils in this world, in order to give them rest. Therefore in times of sorrow, we should take comfort, and have faith that the Lord doeth all things well and in mercy.

At the proper time her Christian sisters performed their last duties to Tabitha, that is, according to their custom they washed her, and having wrapped her in clean clothes for burial, they laid her in an upper chamber. Thus they prepared for her funeral. While friends were gathering together to look on her face once more, the Christian brethren sent two of their number for the Apostle Peter to come from Lydda. Up to this time no apostle had raised any one to life, so that they did not know that Peter could raise this woman to life. Lydda was about four miles from Joppa. The brethren knew that Peter was there, and they most likely wished him to come and take charge of the funeral. As soon then as Peter heard the news, he came. He came for the funeral. But this apostle had been ordained by our Lord to preach his Gospel, and at this time He thought fit that Peter should give an uncommon proof of it, and therefore He put into Peter's heart to pray that she might be raised to life

again. So when he reached the house, Peter put all forth that were weeping and wailing, and when it was quiet, kneeled down and prayed, "O Lord, in mercy bring back this woman to life again." Then turning himself to the body, said, "Tabitha, arise." As soon as he had said this, she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter near her, she sat up. Peter gave her his hand and lifted her up, and when he had called all the brothers and sisters, he presented her alive to them. How surprised and rejoiced they must have been. Thus instead of a funeral, there were rejoicings, as at a birth; that is, the weeping and wailing gave place to joy, such joy as is seldom known.

The object to be gained by this miracle was fully realized, for Tabitha was not only raised to life again through the prayer of Peter, but she also became strong and well as before, "and it was known throughout all Joppa: and many believed in the Lord."

But why was this story related to-day? We have just heard of the death of a very pious Christian lady to whom we were closely connected, and who like Tabitha was "full of good works and alms-deeds which she did." Who was she? Our dearly beloved mother in the Gospel, Mrs. Ballantine, who for twenty-seven years lived among us, and then, being compelled by necessity, returned

and spent the remainder of her days in America. The sad news of her death reached us last Thursday. To-day we wish to present a few thoughts suggested by her death. There were many things in her life like Tabitha's, and for this reason Tabitha's narrative was related as a preface. We will now present some thoughts suggested by the funeral of our dear sainted Mrs. Ballantine.

It is the custom at a funeral to relate some things that have occurred during the life of the departed one. This is very appropriate. For what is the force of the verse in the Bible which says, " It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting? " We go to the house where one has died, and take to ourselves the lessons we should, in thinking over the good and the evil done by the departed one, and thus we prepare for our own death. It is for just this reason that going to the house of mourning is considered good. Therefore listen attentively now, while some events that occurred in the life of Mrs. Ballantine are related to you.

I must, however, say that I wish there were one better prepared than I am, to stand up here today, and speak to you about our dear lady's life. But inasmuch as there is no one else here, I will endeavor to do it as well as I know how. I trust

you will pardon any mistakes I may make inadvertently, or for want of correct information.

Mrs. Ballantine was born in Henniker, New Hampshire, in the United States of America, on the 5th of January, 1812. Her father was Judge Darling. In that country they are in the habit of educating their daughters just as they do their sons, and inasmuch as her father was of a good family, and wealthy, he was able to educate his daughter in the most approved way. She went to school from her earliest days, and made good progress in her studies. While young her father was not a Christian, but her mother was, and this mother endeavored to give her daughter a religious training. We know but little of Mrs. Ballantine's early days, but I have heard one incident which shows the inclination of her mind from the beginning. Harriet Newell was the first missionary lady of our American Board that died, and it occurred shortly after she came out here. Mrs. Ballantine when a young girl read the memoir of this Harriet Newell, and after it was finished she said to her mother that she wanted to be like Harriet Newell, and become a missionary of the Gospel of Jesus. Her mother laid her hand on her head and said, "Well, my dear, I trust that when you are older you will engage in the same work." We shall see how the wishes of the

daughter, and the hopes of her mother regarding them, were realized, by the following narrative. From this incident, it is evident that Mrs. Ballantine's heart was drawn to the service of the Lord from a child. At what date she united with the church we do not know, but it was when she was young, and we know that from that day she was always actively engaged in the Lord's work.

When a gentleman wishing to engage in missionary work is desirous of being married, he seeks a wife who, like himself, wishes to engage in the same work. When our respected Mr. Ballantine chose this lady for a wife, he doubtless chose her not only for her excellences of character, but also because she was desirous of engaging in the work of a foreign missionary. As the saying goes, "Intimacy is from similar inclinations;" so this excellent couple were drawn together, and on the 5th of May, 1835, they were married. Mrs. Ballantine was then twenty-three years of age. They prepared to embark at once for India, although her friends were much opposed to her coming out. They told her that she was of a weak and delicate constitution, and she would not be able to stand that hot climate for one year even. But she replied, that she would "have greater joy in telling the news of salvation for one year in India, than to live many years in her

own land." We shall see from the following narrative how, by the mercy of God, she was spared to live and labor most untiringly in this hot climate for twenty-seven years. It is better for a servant of the Lord to follow the leadings of Providence, than to listen to the advice of physicians, or of those who think they understand. Eleven days after their marriage, that is, on the 16th May, 1835, Mr. and Mrs. Ballantine embarked from Boston, and on the 11th October following, or in about five months, they arrived safely in Bombay. After remaining one year in Bombay, they came up to Ahmednuggur. From that time to the last, they carried on their mission work in this place. At one time Mr. Ballantine became so sick, that in December, 1849, they left us to visit their native land. But as soon as his health was restored they came back, reaching Nuggur in October, 1852, within three years after leaving us. Then after twelve years more of labor, Mr. Ballantine again fell sick, and they were again compelled to seek their native land. They left Nuggur in July, 1865, and remained in Bombay for a while, to try the effects of medicine, and the change of air, but finding it of no use, they embarked in the beginning of September for America. When they entered the Bay of Biscay, on the 9th of November, Mr. Ballantine died on

the steamer. Mrs. Ballantine, now a widow and sunk in a sea of sorrow, went on alone to America with the children, and from that time to the day of her death she remained in America doing what she could for the cause of missions. Thus you have been told what, and where, and how, her life was spent. I will now speak of the characteristics of her nature, and of her work.

Mrs. Ballantine's pious mother died while she was still young, but before her death she had trained her dear daughter to a devotional style of life. She united with the church before her mother's death, and, like her mother, she used to pray much in secret. She daily, with great satisfaction, read and meditated upon the Scriptures, and regularly made use of all the means for securing the Christian virtues. The light of her piety, instead of going out, like that of some unsettled Christians, never faded, nor became dim; but as the sun passing up from its rising to the meridian gradually increases in intensity, so her piety increased more and more. She had received an excellent education, not only in matters pertaining to this world, but also in the Bible. She was not only learned, but was possessed of every excellence of character, and yet she was very retiring and humble. For this reason her learning and her excellences of character were concealed like hidden

gems, that is, she never made an effort to show them off. They were fully revealed only to those who were intimate with her. It is said of her that she was a woman of few words, but of many good works, that is, she did not talk so much as she wrought.

Those who were most intimately associated with her bore witness that she was a woman of great sincerity. In all she did, she was actuated by pure and sincere motives, and was without deceit, hypocrisy, or wrong desires. Whatever she had to do in the service of her Master, she did not do it as if it was thrown upon her and she must do it some way or other, but as a person engaged in a piece of work that is to be of great profit to himself, and therefore he does it with great delight and intentness; so her work for her Master was performed zealously and with great delight.

Her disposition was very mild and gentle. In her mission work, even though the people around her vexed her greatly, still she showed towards all a great deal of love and patience and gentleness. Those who were continually with her never saw her face ruffled with anger, nor did she ever rebuke any one in angry tones.

She was also of a very kind and generous disposition. Those for whom she labored mostly in connection with her mission work were from a

poor and destitute class. For helpers, she had only such as these around her. All went to her for help and alms. Their habits were just opposite to those prescribed by our Lord. Many of them showed a disposition to receive as much as they could get, rather than to give; for many who were not really destitute would come to beg from this lady. And she, knowing it was more blessed to give than to receive, had made this precept so truly her own, that she would never send away any petitioner abashed. She was so full of compassion, that she became, as it were, a mother's home for all. They came to her so much with their worldly sorrows, as well as their aches and pains, that had not her husband forbidden them, they would not have allowed her time to eat or to sleep. She did so many things out of pity for those around her, that those who have succeeded her find fault with her, and say that she allowed the people to get into the habit of begging so much that they have become beggarly in their dispositions. On the other hand, these very people find fault with the missionaries who have succeeded her, and call them close-fisted and hard-hearted. "They have gone, our generous Mr. and Mrs. Ballantine!" Mrs. Ballantine was not satisfied with giving merely to those who came to her for aid. She went frequently to visit

the people around her in their homes, and those who were sick were not only provided with medical aid and medicine, but proper food, prepared at her own house, was sent to them. She visited the sick ones regularly, until they were well. As a mother anxiously watches over the spiritual and bodily interests of her own children, so did Mrs. Ballantine watch over all the interests of those who were under her care, or those who had sought refuge with her, and thus did she labor for them. All that Paul says in 1 Thessalonians ii. 7–12 about himself and his companions is especially applicable to Mr. and Mrs. Ballantine.

One reason why Mrs. Ballantine had the means of bestowing charities on those around her was, that she denied herself in many ways. She, herself, wore clothes more common and less expensive than those of the rest of the family. She bought nothing luxurious in the way of food or clothes. Besides this, she did as much as she could of the work in her own house, that might have been done by servants. In this way she saved money and applied it to works of charity. Thus Mrs. Ballantine chose the best way of procuring the means for doing good to others. Although she was delicate, and of a weak constitution, yet she had formed the excellent habit of making such good use of her time, that she never

allowed a quarter of an hour to pass away unimproved. Thus she was able to accomplish a great deal of work. Soon after coming up to Nuggur she took charge of the Christian Girls' school, and up to the time of her leaving, she taught in it most zealously and assiduously. I have called it the "Christian Girls'" school, for the scholars were principally the children of Christians; but many heathen girls also attended it, and some of them became Christians by means of the instruction received in it. There were native teachers in this school, but in order that those teachers might do their duty more faithfully to the scholars, she would not only look after the teachers, and examine the studies taught by them, but also teach some things herself that they could not, and thus she spent from three to four hours daily in the school. Besides this she frequently selected some of the scholars, and would take them into the house out of school hours, and spend a great deal of time in teaching them the Bible. There are many accomplished and well educated girls, graduates of this school, who as Christian women and mothers, guiding well their own houses, are today most usefully employed in this and other missions. These will never forget the many benefits they received from this lady. The wife of the writer of this was at first in Mrs. Abbott's chil-

dren's school, and then entered Mrs. Ballantine's school, and after graduating there, became a teacher in it. This school was a boarding-school, and for this reason many Christian mothers came and resided here. Mrs. Ballantine herself taught many of these mothers, and others under her care, to read the Bible; and daily at noon, while the girls were eating and the heathen mothers waiting for their dishes, Mrs. Ballantine would collect them together and read to them from the Bible. In this way many of those who would never have heard one word of the Bible received precious instruction.

All this work Mrs. Ballantine performed outside of her house. From this some may think that she left her household work for others to do. But it was not so. Even though she did so much outside, still she did not neglect one duty in her own house. She had servants to help her, but she superintended everything herself very carefully, and her household affairs were managed with great skill.

Although she spent so much time in teaching others, yet she did not neglect her own children. There were no schools for them to attend, so they had to be taught at home. Part of this work of teaching the children was done by Mr. Ballantine, and part of it by Mrs. Ballantine. These children were so well taught, that when they became older

and went to their own land, they were well prepared to enter boarding-schools or colleges. This shows that they were as well taught in the preparatory studies in their own home in India, as they would have been in America. The religious training that Mrs. Ballantine gave her children was most excellent. Three of her daughters are now engaged in mission work in India; and the fourth daughter, although prevented by the state of her health from coming to a foreign country to labor, has been engaged in teaching school until lately, and now she has become the wife of a minister of the Gospel, and is also engaged in the work of the Lord. Out of the three sons, one has for the last four or five years been engaged in a business independent of the mission in this country, and has preached the Gospel according to his opportunity, for he feels that it is very necessary for some to be examples of preaching the Gospel without pay from any mission society. One of his brothers feels just so. He is at present practicing as a physician in America. It is his intention to come to India soon and preach the Gospel, and also practice as a physician. (Before going to print we have learned that he has now decided to come out as a missionary physician, under the patronage of the American Board.) The third son has just completed his college course. After finishing a theological

course, it is his intention to come and labor in India as a missionary. Many are acquainted with the three daughters who are now laboring as missionaries in India, and know how the mantle of the mother has fallen upon them, and how closely they are walking in her footsteps. From this we see how Mrs. Ballantine received the blessing attendant upon keeping the command of the Lord to "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

The last nine years of Mrs. Ballantine's life were spent in America. She was very desirous to spend those years in mission work in India. That is, although she had become a widow, she greatly desired to come and labor as a missionary in this country till her death. But Providence did not open the way for this. Still she labored much for the Lord in America. There is a noted college in Amherst, the town where she resided. Her house was close by this college, and some of the students boarded with her. Through her influence, some of them became Christians, and some five or six decided to become missionaries to a foreign country. She frequently addressed the ladies in Amherst as well as in other places. She did much to influence them in favor of the Woman's Board, a society lately established by the Christian ladies of America in order to send the Gospel to women in foreign lands. This lady was

also much interested in teaching every Sabbath in a Sabbath-school for colored people. Some of these were much benefited by her teaching. Thus she was able, even in America, to satisfy the earnest desire of her heart to tell the good news of salvation to despised, ignorant, black people.

And thus did this lady continue to work for the Lord up to the last week of her life. Even the last Sabbath of her life on earth she went, as was her wont, to the house of God to engage in worship, and on that day she partook of the Lord's Supper for the last time. After coming home she said, "I am tired, my feet and hands ache, and I feel very languid." This was her last sickness. She found it necessary to take her bed. Wednesday she felt somewhat better, but on Thursday congestion of the brain set in. She became insensible, and did not speak. From that time she remained in this state, as if asleep, until Friday evening, the 8th May, when she slept in Jesus, and her life on earth ended. The Hindus pray for a "Life without want, and a Death without pains." This lady had never asked for this. Had it been the Lord's will she would have been ready to suffer want in life, and then to endure pain in her death. But the Lord granted her even what she did not ask for. She never suffered from want, and after a life rich in abundant service for the Lord, she died, without a long lingering

sickness, and without any severe pains or aches. Thus she passed into everlasting rest with the Lord. She did not become alive again like Tabitha, for her work on earth was completed. It pleased the Lord that she should no longer toil and labor on earth: He thought it better that she should be with Him in the "rest that remaineth." Although he did not allow her longer the companionship of such servants of his, like Peter in Tabitha's case, yet she went to be in glory forever, with the Lord Jesus Christ, and with God the Father, and with his holy angels, which was far better. There she met her dear husband, who went before her nine years ago, and with him, and with all the dear friends and relatives who went before her, she has entered into the joy of her dear Lord forever.

What is she doing and enjoying there now? Let us look through the telescope of the Revelation written by John: "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. . . . . These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the

blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Rev. vii. 9–17. And also in Rev. xiv. 1–3: "And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth." Among this unnumbered multitude spoken of in these verses, we shall see our dear Mrs. Ballantine rejoicing in the joy of her dear Lord, and praising him. Who therefore of us would desire that like Tabitha she should return and live with us on earth a little longer? No one of us would have her leave such immeasurable and unspeakable joy to come and live with us again. I am

sure of this. Let us not therefore sorrow for her in the least, but on the other hand bring to mind her present exceedingly happy state, and praise the Lord on her account. And now having listened to this account of her life, let us, in the words of Balaam, ask to "die the death of the righteous," and pray that our last end may be like his; that is, let us die the death of him who has been made righteous by the merit of the Saviour, in order that our last end may be like his. Men of the world seek only to know how to enjoy the pleasures and sports of this life, but the true worshippers of God seek to know *how* to die the death and gain the end of the righteous. Therefore let all those who desire such a death as this spend their lives as did this lady, in the service of the Lord. Then will their last end be like hers. There is no doubt of this. Therefore let all who have heard this account resolve to serve the Lord as she did, and ask Him to help them in carrying out this resolution to the end. Especially let all the women, young and old, in connection with this Ahmednuggur mission, who were acquainted with her Christian life, take instruction from this narrative. Ask the Lord's help with an earnest desire that her mantle may fall on you. And ever bear in mind, that by proper efforts, and by seeking God's help, it is possible for you to serve Him as did this lady, and even more completely than she did.